

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 25, 2011

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 379**

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**Introduced by ~~Senator Fuller~~ *Senators Fuller and Cannella***

February 15, 2011

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An act to amend Section 709 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to telecommunications.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 379, as amended, Fuller. Telecommunications policies.

Under existing law, the Public Utilities Commission has regulatory authority over public utilities, including telephone corporations, as defined. Existing law declares the policies for telecommunications for California, including: (1) to continue our universal service commitment by assuring the continued affordability and widespread availability of high-quality telecommunications services to all Californians; (2) to focus efforts on providing educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based organizations, and governmental institutions with access to advanced telecommunications services in recognition of their economic and societal impact; and (3) to promote economic growth, job creation, and the substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid implementation of advanced information and communications technologies by adequate long-term investment in the necessary infrastructure.

This bill would instead declare the policies for ~~advanced telecommunications and information services~~ for California, including: (1) to continue our universal service commitment by ensuring the continued affordability and widespread availability of high-quality telecommunications ~~and information~~ services to all Californians; (2) to focus efforts on providing public safety institutions, educational

institutions, health care institutions, community-based organizations, and governmental institutions with access to advanced telecommunications and information services in recognition of their economic and societal impact; (3) to promote economic growth, job creation, and the substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid implementation of advanced telecommunications and information technologies by facilitating adequate long-term investment in the necessary infrastructure throughout the state, including in rural areas; and (4) to continue universal service rate support for telephone corporations subject to rate-of-return regulation by the commission for the purpose of providing rural areas of the state with access to ~~advanced telecommunications and information services that are reasonably equivalent to access in urban areas.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 709 of the Public Utilities Code is  
2 amended to read:  
3 709. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the policies  
4 ~~for advanced telecommunications and information services~~  
5 *telecommunications* in California are as follows:  
6 (a) To continue our universal service commitment by ensuring  
7 the continued affordability and widespread availability of  
8 high-quality telecommunications ~~and information~~ services to all  
9 Californians.  
10 (b) To focus efforts on providing public safety institutions,  
11 educational institutions, health care institutions, community-based  
12 organizations, and governmental institutions with access to  
13 advanced telecommunications and information services in  
14 recognition of their economic and societal impact.  
15 (c) To continue universal service rate support for telephone  
16 corporations subject to rate-of-return regulation by the commission  
17 for the purpose of providing rural areas of the state with access to  
18 ~~advanced telecommunications and information services that are~~  
19 ~~reasonably equivalent to access in urban areas.~~ to  
20 *telecommunications services.*  
21 (d) To encourage the development and deployment of new  
22 technologies and the equitable provision of services in a way that

1 efficiently meets consumer needs and encourages the ubiquitous  
2 availability of a wide choice of state-of-the-art services.

3 (e) To assist in bridging the “digital divide” by encouraging  
4 expanded access to state-of-the-art technologies for rural,  
5 inner-city, low-income, and disabled Californians.

6 (f) To promote economic growth, job creation, and the  
7 substantial social benefits that will result from the rapid  
8 implementation of advanced telecommunications and information  
9 technologies by facilitating adequate long-term investment in the  
10 necessary infrastructure throughout the state, including in rural  
11 areas.

12 (g) To promote lower prices, broader consumer choice, and  
13 avoidance of anticompetitive conduct.

14 (h) To remove the barriers to open and competitive markets and  
15 promote fair product and price competition in a way that  
16 encourages greater efficiency, lower prices, and more consumer  
17 choice.

18 (i) To encourage fair treatment of consumers through provision  
19 of sufficient information for making informed choices,  
20 establishment of reasonable service quality standards, and  
21 establishment of processes for equitable resolution of billing and  
22 service problems.